

Agenda Date: September 14, 2005
Item Number: A1

Docket: UT-051103

Company Name: Telecommunications, General.

Staff: Rebecca Beaton, Telecommunications Analyst
Deborah Reynolds, Telecommunications Analyst
Jonathan Thompson, Assistant Attorney General

Recommendation:

Take no action.

Background:

At the August 17, 2005, Commission Open Meeting, Commission Staff (Staff) presented the initial results of a review of the numbering resources used in the 360 area code. The numbers are assigned by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) designated North American Numbering Administrator (NANPA) and the Pooling Administrator (PA), NeuStar Inc. The Staff recommended the Commission take no action on the matter until the docket was brought back to the Open Meeting on September 14, 2005.

Commission Staff and the 34 service providers identified as holding numbering resources in excess of FCC requirements have come to agreement on one-thousand number block and ten-thousand number prefix returns. The attachment lists those service providers and the specific numbers each has committed to return to the inventory in the 360 area code by September 30, 2005. Staff worked with each service provider based on the August 2005 Number Resource Utilization Forecast (NRUF) to identify telephone number resources for return to the inventory in the 360 area code. The industry was responsive to Staff inquiries on the issue of area code exhaust.

Discussion:

The 360 area code is approaching a critical stage where the Commission, Staff, public counsel, industry members and the public will need to make plans and expend resources to address the impact of either an overlay or a split. Numbering resources can be returned to NANPA and the PA without harm or effect on either customers or service providers. Staff believes the return of unused numbering resources will provide a sufficient quantity to allow NeuStar to factor such returns into their semi-annual area code forecast and to provide an extended timeline for the 360 area code.

The Commission has consistently required that the telecommunications industry make more efficient use of its existing supply of numbering resources before it is allowed to introduce any more area codes in the state. In order to forestall a 360 area code overlay or a split, numbering resources must be returned by service providers for reallocation by the PA and NANPA.

A ten-percent utilization threshold for each thousand-number block held by a service provider was established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in CC Docket No. 99-200 dated March 31, 2000. The FCC stated service providers are allowed to keep a six-month inventory of numbering resources including one "footprint" block in each rate center. If a service provider finds number usage in a particular thousand-number block is ten percent or less, FCC rules require such number blocks be donated to the Pooling Administrator for reassignment.

Three ten-thousand number prefixes and 417 one-thousand number blocks (10 blocks in each code) for a total of 447,000 numbers will be returned to the 360 area code inventory by September 30, 2005. Staff expects many of the number blocks will be combined in the inventory to produce prefixes. Only complete prefixes are considered when NANPA evaluates an area code for exhaust projections. If a service provider returns a full prefix that still has customer numbers in use, it may take another 66 days to be returned to the Pooling Administrator's inventory. A prefix returned with numbers initiates a process to either identify a new service provider prepared to assume responsibility as the "code holder" or numbers are disconnected before the prefix is placed back in inventory. Timing for number resource returns is critical as service providers are required to report number use data to NANPA and the PA as of December 2005.

NANPA forecasts the 360 area code will run out of telephone numbers third quarter 2007. NANPA will make another area code forecast in 2006, based on information regarding service provider projections, actual number use, numbers designated as held in reserve for future use, and codes returned to the inventory.

Conclusion:

All service providers identified by Staff in July as holding excess numbering resources in the 360 area code have either committed to return those resources or demonstrated

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that they are entitled to hold the resources. Therefore the Commission need not take action at this time to reclaim resources.